



It Wasn't a Bullet & The Price in Blood Education Plan



Overview: The Civil War was the deadliest conflict in this nation's history. Six hundred eighteen thousand Americans died in this struggle, exceeding the nation's losses from the Revolutionary War to the early years of Vietnam. Twice as many died from disease as battle. The totals are only estimates, some historians place the figure closer to seven hundred thousand.

Medical science was just beginning to be understood at the onset of the Civil War. Germs were unheard of, and surgery techniques had not been improved since the early 1800's. Hospitals were rarely used since most sickness was treated at home. Medicines were primitive and in many cases prescribed on an experimental basis. The most common diseases were typhoid, typhus, measles, mumps, smallpox, and malaria. The main causes for so many deaths from disease were due to poor diet, hygiene, and sanitation.

Civil War hospitals could frighten even the bravest soldier. They were usually over-crowded, unsanitary and filled with germs. Soldiers had a poor opinion of the medical staff because they had observed first hand the amputations of arms and legs as a precaution against gangrene. The soldiers were afraid, and believed some of the amputations were not necessary because not everyone got gangrene. Many times soldiers died of infection after being treated in unsanitary situations. Sterilization of wounds was not accepted until 1865, and sterilization of a surgeon's hands and his surgical tools began much later. The Southern doctor had an especially difficult time because he could not obtain the latest medicines due to the blockade of Southern ports. Substitutes were used as well as home remedies or folk medicine.

Grades: 3rd – 12th

Time: Each program takes about 1 hour.

Learning Objectives

It Wasn't a Bullet

At the end of the activity, students will be able to:

- Interpret why poor medical practices killed many soldiers.
- Demonstrate and describe how care was given to wounded soldiers in Civil War hospitals.

The Price in Blood

The student will:

- analyze, interpret and evaluate a variety of graphic information

Educational Standards

From the South Carolina Curriculum and Standards available online at

<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/cso/standards/ss/> ,

<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/cso/standards/ela/documents/standards.pdf>

<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/cso/standards/math/>,

http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/cso/standards/science/documents/ScienceStandardsNov182005_001.doc

It Wasn't a Bullet

Social Studies

3-4.1, 3-4.4, 3-4.5, 4-6.4, 4-6.6, 8-3.6, USHC-4.1, USHC-4.3

Language Arts

3-8-R1.1, 3-8-R1.3, 3-8-R1.4, 3-5-R1.5, 3-5-R1.6, 3-8-R1.13,
3-5-8-R1.14, 4-R1.15, 3-5-R1.15, 3-5-R1.15/16, 3-8-W1.1, 3-8-W1.2, 3-8-W1.3,
3-8-W1.4, 3-8-W1.5, 3-8-W1.6, 3-8-W1.6.1, 5-W1.6.3, 3-5-W2, 3-8-RS1, 3-8-RS2,
3-5-RS3
6-8-W1.6.3, 6-8-W1.6.4, 6-8-W2.1, 6-8-W2.2, 6-8-W4, 6-8-RS3.1, 6-8-RS3.2
E1- E4-R1.2, E1-E4-W1.1, E1-E4-W1.2, E1- E4- W1.3, E1- E4-W1.4, E1- E4-W1.5,
E1-E4-W1.6, E1- E4-W1.6.1, E1- E4-W1.6.3, E1-E4-W2.1, E1-E4-W2.2, E1-E4-W4

Science

7-3.4

The Price in Blood

Social Studies

3-4.1, 3-4.4, 3-4.5, 4-6.4, 4-6.6, 8-3.6, USHC-4.1, USHC-4.3

Math

Numbers and Operations: 2-IIIC.4, 5-IIIB.3, 8-IIIA.1, 9-12 IIIA.1

Algebra: 3-5 IB.1, 7-IIB.2

Materials

It Wasn't a Bullet

Index cards with illnesses and medicines, pencils, paper

The Price in Blood

Price in Blood activity sheet, Pencil, Paper, poster board, markers

Preparation for Activity

- Gather all needed materials for programs.

Steps of the Activity

It Wasn't a Bullet

1. With the students gathered in the chosen area there are some questions and discussions that need to happen to kick off the activity.

- *Ask the students how they think most Civil War soldiers died.*

Then explain why most soldiers died of disease rather than gunfire.

- *Ask students what it would be like to work in a hospital where hundreds of wounded soldiers are constantly arriving.*

Optional: Read an excerpt from Hospital Sketches by Louisa May Alcott.

2. Have the students define different illnesses and symptoms.

3. Divide the class into 6 teams. One member is the camp doctor and the other members are sick soldiers. Give each sick soldier a card with the problem on it. Give the doctor the card with the medicines. These are actual "cures" from the war.

Tell the teams to see what their doctor would use to cure them.

4. Class discussion to compare cures and reveal answers.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Have students research to discover what the cures for these problems would be today.

2. Ask students to imagine they are a camp doctor or nurse. Write a diary entry of their typical day.

3. Have students research a native plant that was used by early Americans for medicinal purposes. Research "home" remedies or folk medicines still in use today.

4. Divide class into groups of five and explain that one member is a newspaper reporter, one is a doctor in a war hospital, one is a nurse and the other two are patients. It is the week after a major battle. The reporter has been assigned to interview the others to determine whether adequate care is being provided for the wounded.

The Price in Blood

1. Using the Price in Blood activity sheet, the students will use a variety of statistical information that details the available number of losses for North and South in order to formulate a bar graph. The students will answer questions relating to the casualties of the Civil War.